



Fact File

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U.S. Army, Europe & Seventh Army Fact File

HISTORY – 12TH COMBAT AVIATION BRIGADE



The 12th Combat Aviation Brigade first organized as the 12th Aviation Group at Fort Benning, Georgia, on 18 June 1965. The unit deployed to Vietnam in August as a command element for non-organic Army aviation units, and by November 1965, the group consisted of 11,000 personnel and 34 aviation units. Assigned to the III Military Region in Vietnam, the 12th Group was the largest unit of its type to serve in combat. Its colors, emblazoned with 18 campaign streamers, give lasting testimony to its role in the Vietnam War. The unit earned the Meritorious Unit Citation, two Vietnamese Crosses for Gallantry with Palm, and the Vietnamese Civic Action Medal, First Class while in Vietnam.

Upon its return in March 1973, the 12th Aviation Group became a major subordinate command of the XVIII Airborne Corps, Fort Bragg, North Carolina. In November 1979, the 12th Aviation Group deployed to Lindsey Air Station, Wiesbaden, Germany as a major subordinate command of the V United States Corps, providing command and control of aviation units throughout the V Corps area of operation. In April 1984, Headquarters Company, 12th Aviation Group moved to Wiesbaden Air Base.

In October 1987, under army-wide restructuring, the 12th Aviation Group was re-designated as the 12th Aviation Brigade, along with its subordinate units: 5th Battalion, 158th Aviation Regiment; C Company, 7th Battalion, 158th Aviation Regiment; and B Company, 6th Battalion, 158th Aviation Regiment. In the latter part of 1988, the Brigade re-structured again when the 5th Squadron (AH 64), 6th Cavalry Regiment arrived in Europe.

In August 1990, the Brigade deployed to Southwest Asia for Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm with 2-3 Aviation Regiment (Attack) attached. During Desert Storm the Brigade provided a highly mobile and lethal maneuver force to the multi-national forces in Saudi Arabia. Initially attached to the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), the Brigade became a major subordinate command of XVIII Airborne Corps in January 1991. During the four-day coalition ground offensive, the Brigade flew nearly 400 flight hours, transporting 390 tons of cargo to forward deployed units and providing essential combat and combat support services for the ground offensive.

On 15 June, 1992, the 5th Squadron, 6th Cavalry Regiment was de-activated as part of the downsizing of USAREUR. The 3rd Battalion, 58th Aviation Regiment (Air Traffic Services) joined the Brigade on 16 June 1992.

Since the end of the Cold War, the Brigade has played a major role in America's peacekeeping operations. From 1991 until 1996, 12th Brigade ensured the safety of Kurdish citizens during Operation Provide Comfort. The Brigade operated the Beirut Air Bridge from 1997 until 1998, providing a logistical lifeline to the US Embassy in Beirut from Cyprus. The Brigade also deployed soldiers to Hungary and Bosnia in 1995 to enforce the peace during Operations Joint Endeavor and Joint Guard.

In April 1999, the Brigade deployed to Tirana, Albania as part of Task Force Hawk in support of NATO Operation Allied Force. The Brigade Task Force consisted of 65 aircraft including UH-60s, CH-47s, AH-64s, and UH-60 MEDEVAC aircraft. When peace was declared in June 1999, the Brigade transported elements of the 82nd Airborne Division into Macedonia and Kosovo, moving 390 personnel, 24 vehicles, and 13 pallets of equipment in less than 48 hours of the signing of the Military Technical Agreement. The Brigade flew in excess of 6,000 hours and conducted 22,185 aircraft movements in support of operations in Albania, Macedonia, and Kosovo, with CH-47 and Air Traffic Control elements supporting Task Force Falcon until March 2001 and June 2000, respectively.



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After returning from Task Force Hawk and Task Force Falcon, 12th Brigade prepared for re-structuring and re-stationing initiatives. USAREUR Movement Directive 5-00 directed all of the Aviation Brigade elements stationed at Wiesbaden Army Airfield to move to Giebelstadt Army Airfield. On 30 June 2000, 5th Battalion, 158th Aviation Regiment, the largest aviation battalion in theater consisting of 840 soldiers, split into two separate battalions, 3-158 Aviation Regiment and 5-158th Aviation Regiment. On 31 August 2000, all units from Wiesbaden closed on Giebelstadt Army Airfield.

In support of the Global War on Terror, the 12th Aviation Brigade conducted full spectrum combat operations during its year-long deployment to Operation Iraqi Freedom. The Brigade flew thousands of hours, moved over 25,000 personnel, and controlled over 230,000 air movements.

In February 2005 the 12th Aviation Brigade deployed to Afghanistan, in support Operation Enduring Freedom and to Pakistan in support of International Earthquake Humanitarian Relief Operations. While in support of Operation Enduring Freedom Task Force Griffin flew in excess of 52,000 hours, transported 105,000 personnel, and moved over 25 million pounds of cargo.

On 7 August, 2006, the units of 4th Brigade, 1st Infantry Division combined with units of both the 12th Aviation Brigade and the former 11th Aviation Regiment were re-designated as the 12th Combat Aviation Brigade, attached to the 1st Armored Division. On 20 March, 2007 the 12th CAB became a separate Brigade under the V United States Corps.

Most recently, the 12th CAB deployed to Iraq in the summer of 2007; organized as Task Force XII in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. TF XII served in Balad, Iraq as the Corps Aviation Brigade under Multi-National Corps-Iraq over a four month period before relocating to Taji as the Aviation Brigade under Multi-National Division-Baghdad.

Since its organization in 1965, the 12th Combat Aviation Brigade has served as a key member of the combined arms team, dedicated to the preservation of peace. The Brigade's motto, "Wings of Victory," continues to exemplify the standard by which the brigade conducts its missions in support of the United States of America.

The brigade is currently based in Bavaria's Ansbach Community, residing at both Katterbach and Illesheim Army Airfields. The 12th Combat Aviation Brigade currently consists of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 12th CAB; 2-159th Attack Reconnaissance Battalion; 3-159th Attack Reconnaissance Battalion; 3-158th Assault Helicopter Battalion; 5-158th General Support Aviation Battalion and 412th Aviation Support Battalion. Attached to the brigade are 1-214th General Support Aviation Battalion and 3-58th Aviation Operations Battalion.

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